

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00047 090427Z

60

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAJ-01 INRE-00 /063 W

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O 090401Z JAN 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4995

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: DEATH OF PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI: PEKING ATMOSPHERICS,
JANUARY 9

1. PEOPLE'S DAILY OF JAN 9 DEVOTES ITS ENTIRE FRONT PAGE TO THE OBITUARY NOTICE FOR PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI ALONG WITH HIS PICTURE AND THE LIST OF THE FUNERAL COMMITTEE. THE HEADLINE CALLED CHOU A QTE GREAT PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONARY OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE UNQTE AND QTE AN OUTSTANDING COMMUNIST FIGHTER UNQTE. THE OBITUARY EMPHASIZES CHOU'S DEVOTION TO THE COMMUNIST CAUSE AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHINESE PEOPLE.

2. THE FEW CHINESE WE HAVE TALKED WITH AT THIS POINT CLEARLY FEEL A GREAT LOSS WITH CHOU'S PASSING. ALTHOUGH HIS DEATH HAS BEEN LONG EXPECTED, THE EVIDENT GENUINE GRIEF ATTESTS TO CHOU'S POPULARITY WITH THE CHINESE PEOPLE.

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3. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE ARE AS YET NO SIGNS OF PUBLIC

MOURNING IN PEKING EXCEPT THE LOWERING OF PRC FLAGS TO HALF-MAST. PEKING RESIDENTS ARE GOING ABOUT THEIR DAILY ROUTING HERE TODAY, THOUGH PERHAPS IN A MORE SUBDUED FASHION THAN NORMAL. PEOPLE WENT TO WORK AS ALWAYS THIS MORNING, GOVERNMENT OFFICES ARE OPEN, THE USUAL TOURISTS ARE HAVING THEIR PICTURES TAKEN IN TIEN AN MEN SQUARE, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF INCREASED SECURITY IN THE CITY, AND NO UNUSUAL ACTIVITY IS NOTICEABLE, EITHER AT CHUNG NAN HAO OR THE GREAT HALL.

4. WE HAD NO INDICATIONS YESTERDAY THAT CHOU HAD DIED THAT MORNING , BUT A MAJOR MEETING AT THE GREAT HALL IN THE LATE AFTERNOON (ABOUT FORTY RED FLAG LIMOUSINES WERE PARKED OUTSIDE) MAY HAVE BEEN CONNECTED WITH THE PREMIER'S DEATH. THAYER

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